



## **You mean I can get paid to work here? The impact of service-learning and volunteerism on the selection of nonprofit careers**

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### **Summary**

This research will address the experiences of nonprofit employees prior to their entry into the sector that may have influenced their career decision, specifically their participation in service-learning and volunteering. The implications of this research will be to fill a significant gap in the nonprofit management literature as well as the service-learning and engagement literature. This research will further define outcomes of service-learning and volunteering and will also provide nonprofit organizations, career counselors, and others with information to help better target efforts to recruit into the nonprofit workforce.

In 2004, the total nonprofit workforce (including paid staff and volunteer staff) comprised 10.5 percent of the United States workforce (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2006), making the nonprofit sector the nation's fourth-largest employer (Salamon, 2010). This number is greater than the percentage of the workforce employed in construction, utilities, and wholesale trade industries (Salamon & Sokolowski, 2006). When considering only real wages paid, America's nonprofit sector would be the sixteenth largest economy in the world (World Bank, 2006). However, with our workforce comprising such a large segment of America's employed population, we have yet to examine factors that contribute to an

individual's decision to join the nonprofit workforce.

This research will utilize explanatory mixed methods research design, as the topic of study has yet to be examined in an empirical manner and will benefit from a robust analysis of the problem. To date, inquiry into hypothesized reasons for entry into the nonprofit sector has not been studied. This research will offer correlational statistics as well as in-depth examination of the quantitative findings through qualitative inquiry.

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